

ALCESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL RECORD.

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EDITORIAL.

This is the first number of our School Magazine, the "Alcester Grammar School Record," and it would seem not out of place to set down here some reasons why we are making this new venture. With the growth of the school, the number of our interests has increased, things happen, term by term, connected with our work or play, which are of decided interest to us, and it seemed a pity that there should not be some place where these events in school history might be recorded. Added to this, it has become evident that amongst us there are some who have no little ability in writing, and it seems right that their efforts should receive a fuller recognition, and be given a place where they may be read and appreciated by a greater number than hitherto.

We hope also that the magazine may be a means of keeping old scholars, who have left us, more closely in touch with the school. As time goes on, and the number of those who have passed through the school increases, it is sure to be the case that the experiences of some, at any rate, will be both varied and interesting, and of no little use to those still at school. Letters to the Editor from old scholars, telling of their doings, will always be welcomed.

I have already said that one use of the Magazine will be the recording of the school's history, and in order that no part may be entirely omitted from that record, I am inclined to mention briefly certain things in connection with the life of the school since it was started, now, rather more than three years ago. It seems quite strange to think that the number in the school during the first term was only thirty-five—less than there are now in the Preparatory School alone—whilst this term opened with one hundred

and twenty-eight upon the roll. The progress in numbers has been very steady, but I am glad to say that this is not the only kind of progress that has been made. In games, the improvement in the girls' hockey and tennis is most marked, while the boys' football, as evidenced by the results of last season's matches is vastly better than when we started three years ago. Cricket still lags behind somewhat, but it is good to see some promising players amongst the boys in the middle and lower parts of the school, and the matches between the different sides in connection with the Sports Shield, which have been played at Ragley Park this term, have added to the interest, and already improved the play.

Turning from games to the more serious side of our school life, most of those who read these lines will be familiar with the board at the end of the school hall, upon which are inscribed the names of those who, in their studies, here have successfully accomplished that to which they set their minds.

The placing of that board upon the wall in the autumn of 1914 I regard as one of the events in our school history well worth setting down here, indicating, as it does, our strong desire to honour those who by steady and persistent effort in classroom and at home have attained a worthy standard. And as the years pass by, and with the addition of other honours boards our hall becomes oak-panelled, it may be that the list of shining names may seem to say to those who daily stand before them, "We did our best, do you the same." And so those boys and girls in time to come will be aroused to worthy effort, ambitious that their names also may be added to the honourable roll.

My editorial already seems to be full long, but there is still one other matter about which I

should like to say a little. We have adopted a school badge, and a school motto. Our badge represents a Roman soldier holding a standard upon which are two Greek letters. These letters are the first two of the Greek word for Christ, and they indicate that the Roman soldier lived at a time when the Romans were Christians.

Now how and why did we fix upon this as our badge? Well, we who had most to do with choosing it felt that we wished it both to have some real connection with Alcester, and also to illustrate our motto. From time to time Roman coins have been found at Alcester, showing that the Romans were once here, and when a good friend of the school, whom I consulted, suggested that I should look at his old coins, and see if I could get any ideas from them, I gladly accepted his invitation. The result of an evening spent, magnifying glass in hand, examining the marks upon those ancient coins, resulted in my finding the design which we have adopted, and I have never regretted the choice. Clearly our badge is suitable because of its connection with this place where the school is. But this alone would not be enough. A school badge and motto should, if possible, keep before us some ideals for which to strive. The figure of the soldier may surely remind us of courage, steadfastness, honour, qualities which we may all have if we believe in our motto, "Christus nobiscum State"—Christ is with us. Stand firm.

NOTES FROM FRANCE.

Perhaps some of those who read these notes will be disappointed. They would have preferred thrilling stories of battle, of desperate charges across fields strewn with corpses, of breathless moments before the bursting of a shell, and other things of a similar nature. As I have not yet been in such situations, I cannot oblige them, however, but will instead try to convey some impressions of life behind the lines.

Since we came out, we have been living, with the exception of one period of just under a week, in the same place. It is a quaint old-world town, situated in the midst of a flat, pleasant countryside. Two fine church towers soar upwards above the red roofs of the houses, and serve as landmarks for miles round. One is in ruins—the product of the French Revolution. The avalanche of soldiers that fell upon the country after the outbreak of war has probably not transformed it so much as other

towns behind the lines, for it was a garrison town in the times of peace, and we are at present occupying the barracks of one of the French regiments that is now doing such good work in the trenches. Rumour has it that our predecessors have been cut up four times, and are now under their eighth colonel. If this is true, they have suffered very heavily. But there are now also in the barrack square and on the parade ground outside scores and scores of motor wagons, motor cars and motor buses. These last will perhaps seem most strange to those at home, but they are some of the most useful vehicles out here, for they are used in taking troops up to the trenches, and in bringing back those who are coming out for a rest. It is quite a common sight to see thirty or forty buses coming one after another along the roads to the front. I myself have been several journeys in them, and can assure you that they are far preferable, in summer at any rate, to the covered-in vans which are used by troops for railway travel. Among the lorries I noticed the other day a German bus, which I suppose had been captured by our men.

In the town there is a continual hurrying to and fro of motor cars with officers of high rank. All day and all night, week day and Sunday, they come and go. There is never any rest, nor will there be till the end of the war. Sometimes bodies of troops march through on their way to the front. Heated and perspiring with the weight of their equipment, covered with the dust of the French roads they all are, but they are all filled with determination to go on, and fight on, giving up their lives if need be, until it shall be never again possible for the enemy to perpetrate such atrocities as he has in Belgium and the north of France. They are all fine men, and strengthened by their training. Sometimes a battery of field guns goes through, sometimes some heavy guns, and motor cycle machine guns. Every day aeroplanes fly round the town to protect it from enemy marauders. So frequently can they be seen that soon one pays very little attention to them.

Our work here is to provide guards. There are various kinds of guards. The most interesting are those at the examining posts. These are at the entrances to the town. No one is allowed to go in or out without a pass. If people have no passes, they are detained and sent under an escort to the assistant provost-marshal, to whom they have to give an account of themselves. Besides examining passes, the sentry on duty has also to keep a lookout for certain suspected persons. Why these persons, whose names are known to the guards, are

wanted is not known to the sentries, but it is probable that they are thought to be spies. The English guard only deals with English people, the French being dealt with by the French guards. There is always a French guard as well as an English at each post. On these posts bayonets are always fixed and rifles loaded.

For just under a week I was in a detachment from the battalion that moved forward to a town within range of the German heavy guns. There were two shell holes in the church and one in the Town Hall. Here it was much more interesting, as we were not very far from our own big guns, and at night we could see their flashes as they fired. We could also see aeroplanes being shelled. First of all could be seen the aeroplane, a tiny speck high up in the sky. Then, probably underneath it, there would suddenly be a sharp flash, and a few seconds later a ball of smoke would develop, black if a German shell, white if English. Shrapnel and star shells could also be seen at night. From a distance a star shell seemed somewhat like a rocket, but more curving.

I should like to say a word about the work the Y.M.C.A. is doing. I had experience of it both at camp in England and at the rest camp at the base on my arrival in France. Those of you who have been under canvas know that it is not possible to obtain a great deal of comfort in a tent, even when in peace time one can take quite a large amount of gear, and it is much less so under active service conditions, when one only carries what is absolutely necessary, and there are ten men in one bell tent. The Y.M.C.A. is doing a great deal to make the life of the men more pleasant. It generally puts up two tents, in one of which one can get refreshments, and in the other one can write and play games, draughts, etc., being provided. It also organises concerts. The most enthusiastic audience I have ever seen was one composed of about a thousand soldiers, some down from the trenches, some about to go up, some convalescent, at a concert given by a concert party from London at the Y.M.C.A. at the base. Where we are now there is no Y.M.C.A., but equally good service is being rendered by the two soldiers' clubs run by the Church of England.

I could add a great deal more, but I expect I should be occupying too much space in the Magazine.

France, June, 1915.

J. F. GIBBONS.

LIFE IN CAMP.

Camp life is not as fine as it sounds, and after the first two weeks it loses all its charm and novelty. Indeed, at times, it seems like a perpetual hustle, cleaning up to go out, and spending five minutes searching for a tin of boot polish.

Naturally when going into camp one of the first things to do is pitching the tents. This does not take very long if you have ten working. After that comes the question of how we shall sleep, remembering that the area at our disposal is only a circle of six feet radius. After a long discussion as to who shall sleep near the flap (front door), the matter is settled by tossing for it. Then you collect your luggage and deposit it on your sector (about 3 feet at its widest). The next act—getting into bed—is always a lively one. You have your equipment, overcoat, rifle and kit bag to dispose of, and no peg to hang them on. Your bag forms your pillow and your clothes the mattress. There is only an oil sheet between you and the turf. The rifle is tied to the pole and your equipment put behind your bag. To lay down your blankets you stand on the next sector, whence you are promptly ejected by the owner with a "Stand on your own blankets!"

Politeness is unknown in camp, but comradeship exists, for you often find two working together. Thus, if you are busy cleaning, your chum looks after your breakfast as well as his own. Rising is as bad as retiring, for then you are hunting for your socks beneath a mass of blankets and overcoats.

Breakfast is at 7.30, and your kit bag forms your chair and your knees the table. Sometimes in walking across the tent someone upsets your tea over your blankets, or as a variation spills some of his over your blankets. Still you accept this as part of the contract, and "carry on" after a small protest.

Every morning we have an hour's Swedish drill before breakfast, and afterwards an hour's bayonet practice, ventilating sacks. Then we get ready for 10.30 parade, when we march off to the hills for a sham fight. After marching three miles to the foot of the hills, we are halted and told by our officer that we are to attack an outpost line reaching along the hillside, and hidden in the coppices. Divided into three parties, right, centre, and left, we advance among the bushes in long lines, one behind the other with about 50 yards interval. The right and centre are small parties, and have to make feint attacks. The left, keeping well hidden, advances steadily till sighted and fired on by the outpost. Immediately we take cover and ascertain the exact position of the outpost. Then the first line dashes forward and takes cover fifty yards ahead. The second and

third lines follow covered by the fire of the first. When within fifty yards of our enemy the three lines join up and charge the position. The outpost is rushed just as their supports come up to reinforce. Immediately we lie down and blaze away our remaining blanks while they are running across the open. Again we charge and clear the field, being two to one. We are awarded the victory by the officer acting as umpire, and fall out, after the "Cease fire!" and "Assembly" have been blown.

After a short rest we return to camp singing, and very pleased with our success. We get back about 5 p.m. and have a cold meat tea with stewed rhubarb. That is typical of a good many field days of which we have two a week.

However, we do not always win, and sometimes get in a mess, where with real bullets we should be "annilated," as the sergeant said.

This will give you some idea of how a sham fight is conducted, and of life in the infantry.

We get a route march occasionally with full equipment, which is cruel on a hot day, and causes Germany to be generally blessed (?) in soldier lingo. However, it has to be done, and I do not mind having two more months in camp if the weather is good.

T. H. G.

A GHOST STORY.

Many centuries ago, before the holy Bishop Ecwyn cursed Alcester, and it had fallen from a flourishing town into a dull little village, a monastery had stood at the entrance of the town. Here the monks had spent their time, when not at prayer, in tilling their land and teaching the people. For there was no other means of obtaining knowledge except from these men, and it was they chiefly who taught the people the trades by which they earned a livelihood.

The monks went on with their work for many years, until the time of the Reformation. Then they were driven from their dwelling, their lands and possessions taken away, and the Monastery left until it fell into decay. As the years went on even the ruins of the building disappeared until at last only a field remained to mark the place where it had once stood; and instead of learning, being encouraged, as it once had been, the inhabitants of Alcester either had to seek knowledge elsewhere, or remain ignorant all their lives. Then a few years ago a school was built on the site of the old monastery, and here children from all neighbouring districts were sent to be educated.

One pitch dark Christmas Eve, as I was going to hear Midnight Mass at church in Alcester, I turned casually to look at the school as I was passing and saw, to my amazement, a peculiar light in the Lower Third form room. Its rays, although bright, did not enable me to see inside, or to tell the exact spot from which they came. Yet, for apparently no reason whatever, I began to experience a feeling of great terror. But, although I was so frightened, I did not attempt to go on. For some strange, unseen power seemed to compel me to go inside to find out the cause of the light.

Trying to assure myself that it was only the school caretaker doing some work which he had forgotten, I opened the gate and entered. But, no sooner had I done so, than, to my horror, the room suddenly became quite dark. Still more terrified now, I attempted to go outside; but I could not. Something forced me to go on. At that instant the light re-appeared in the next form room; yet, before I had time to reach it, it went out again, and a few seconds after I saw it shining through the Lower Fourth window.

I made my way, as quickly as I could, across the lawn to this window, and in a horrible state of fright, looked, or rather was forced to look inside. There, standing in the middle of the room, was the figure of a monk in robes of black and with a cowl over his head. In one hand he carried a stoup full of holy water, and in the other a small brush. As I watched him he dipped the brush into the stoup and sprinkled the floor all over with the holy water, repeating to himself all the time inaudible words. He was carrying no lantern, nor was there any light in the room. Yet it was lit up with the weird rays of light which had attracted me to the spot, and whenever he moved the light shone all round him.

In a short time this strange being walked slowly out through the door. Even from where I was standing I could hear the soft swish of his robes and the heavy tread of his footsteps down the stone passage; and these sounds seemed more uncanny than ever the monk himself had done. When I had once seen this strange figure my first feeling of fear disappeared leaving only curiosity to know what he would do next. So, when I saw the light again, now in the Upper Fourth class room, I went to the window to watch what would happen.

Again the monk sprinkled the room with holy water, only this time not only the floor but the four walls also. As he turned to the window through which I was looking, although I could not see his face and he uttered no sound, he seemed to be

telling me why he was there. I understood at once that this was the spirit of the Abbot who had once lived in the monastery, and who, glad that learning was once more to be encouraged in the old town, had come to bless the school so that it might always prosper. He also told me that he came every year for this purpose, on three nights before Christmas.

As soon as I had grasped the meaning of his visit, the monk glided outside. And, though I did not follow him again, I could see by the light which accompanied him everywhere that he went into each separate room in the school. The last place in which the light shone was the Fifth Form room, upstairs. Then again it vanished, and I saw neither the light nor the monk any more.

P.A.

HOW CAN I HELP ENGLAND?

"Here and here did England help me,
How can I help England?"

Of all the things that England has given me, the greatest is freedom; that glorious thing for which nations have fought ever since the beginning of the world and for which they are still fighting on the fields of France and Belgium. I, as an English girl, enjoy such complete freedom, both in speech and action, as the children of no other nation enjoy. This freedom is an inheritance from those Englishmen who at the battle of Hastings fought so bravely though unsuccessfully, and who at Sluys sallied forth and destroyed the French fleet so utterly that an invasion of England was impossible; who in the reign of Queen Elizabeth preserved England by destroying the Spanish Armada, and thus procured for her that supremacy of the sea which she now enjoys, and who at a much later date fought at Trafalgar and Waterloo. Since 1066 no invader has set foot on our soil. While other countries have been laid waste, our country has been sacred, and while others have been groaning under the heel of a conqueror, ours, though perhaps torn by a civil war, has been comparatively free. Even to-day, if it were not for Admiral Jellicoe and his fleet, England might be as Belgium, and my plight as that of a Belgian girl. Both in the past and to-day I owe to England and the brave men who have fought for her and are still fighting for her, that freedom which is the most precious possession of any nation or individual.

To England and to Englishmen is owing the series of wise and just laws which decide almost every question both social and political, and

which secure the freedom of the individual. The foundation of these laws was laid at Runnymede when the barons of England forced King John to sign Magna Charta. The two clauses, "A man shall be tried by his peers," and "No man shall be imprisoned or punished without trial," afterwards were the basis on which the present judicial system was formed, a system by which a just trial is given to a commoner as much as to a lord, and an alien enemy as much as an Englishman. Then, at a much later date, followed a series of laws affecting social reform, which were only passed after much agitation, but which when passed changed the social life of England for the better. First, the two Reform Bills were passed; then followed several Factory Acts, abolishing the dreadful conditions under which women, girls and even small children worked. Next came the Education Act, by which the State undertook the education of its children. Then, in our own time, came the Old Age Pensions Act, the Compensation Act and the Insurance Act, by which the State provided for the old, and helped the unemployed and the unfortunate.

Not only has England helped me by making and keeping me free, and by governing me with wise laws, but also she has fitted me for my work in after life by giving me a good education almost entirely free of cost, an education which will enable me to earn my own living and to be independent. Besides all this, she has given me the heritage of her name—a name which through all the ages has been renowned and honoured, and she has left for me countless brave and noble deeds, done by noble men for her sake and for the sake of duty.

In return, I can do comparatively little. I cannot fight for her, I cannot become a servant of the State; I cannot colonise or explore, or do anything which will live in history. But, still, I can do something. By being upright and honourable in all I do, I can show myself worthy of the great men in our history. By doing my duty at home, at school and abroad I can emulate their example; and by being loyal in thought, word and deed I can become a good subject of the king and a worthy citizen of the Empire.

When I grow up I shall be a teacher. Then I shall be able to help England by teaching those little ones who may be under me to love and reverence her, and so to conduct themselves as to be worthy of her best traditions, so that they in their time may be worthy citizens; for it has been

said that a nation's best asset lies in the number of good citizens it possesses and not so much on its wealth, its colonies or the number of its successful wars.

Thus England has done much to help me. In the past she has made me free; in the present she is keeping me so. She has made my childhood happy by the laws which she has passed, and she is making my future possible by giving me the necessary education. All through my life the State has helped me and will continue to do so. In return I can become a good citizen. By being unselfish and loving to those around me I can best help her through this war. By making the most of the education afforded me I can repay her for the expense incurred in giving it to me, and by acting as honourably as possible myself I can do something to keep the fair name of England untarnished. And, finally, when I am a teacher, I can, both by example and precept, teach other children how much they owe to England and how they can best repay her for the blood and treasure her sons have spent in bygone years, in order that they and I might benefit.

D.T.

"In the end, a country, true to itself and determined to claim God's gift to brave men, will overmatch a mere army, however solid its force."

War is caused by injustice either on one side or on both. In most wars, therefore, the struggle is between Right and Might. And the question naturally arises, which of these two will win, or whether a country fighting in a noble cause, will be able to withstand successfully one which wages war merely because it desires more power.

There are many instances in history of how nations fighting for freedom have overcome enemies who, if numbers insured victory, would never have been defeated. The Napoleonic wars are an example of this. Napoleon had, during his campaigns a larger and better trained force of men than any other power in Europe. At first, with this army, he won victory after victory, and it seemed that Might would conquer Right. But deep in the hearts of the people he had for a time overcome or was trying to subdue, was the spirit of freedom, and so we may read now of the stubborn resistance of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the Peninsula, and of how their patriotism helped Britain to drive the French back over the Pyrenees.

From that time, the struggle in Europe was mainly between Napoleon and Britain—the one a despot, striving to subdue a country which prevented him from realising his hopes of world empire, the other a people struggling to preserve its own freedom. We know well the result of the warfare—how Britain emerged the victor, and how Napoleon was crushed.

Yet Napoleon's downfall cannot be attributed to the superior numbers of his adversaries. His own army, according to its size, should have been able to withstand that of Britain and the Allies. It was the spirit of patriotism which finally crushed him. His army threatened to bring Europe under the sway of France, and this roused among the nations of Europe a great desire for freedom—a desire felt most keenly in the hearts of all Englishmen. It was the determination of the British army to keep inviolate "the silver-coasted isle," and to free the world from a despot's oppression, which gave us the culminating victory at Waterloo.

The country fighting in a just cause, if not victorious at first, is bound to triumph in the end. One generation may be unsuccessful, but the succeeding one, inspired by the patriotism of its predecessor, will continue the struggle and the country will never rest until it has achieved the work begun in former years. Italy, in 1859, strove under Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel and Cavour, to free herself from the Austrian yoke, and to unite all her separate states under one king. She secured a united Italy, and to-day her love of freedom is causing her to take up the sword once more and to drive the Austrian from the Trentino.

So, too, the French of Alsace-Lorraine, subject to German rule since 1870, have never allowed their patriotism to flag. They have waited patiently for some chance of throwing off the German sway and of joining themselves to their own mother country, France. To-day that chance has come, and is being taken advantage of. This war will not end unless Germany hands over Alsace-Lorraine to France.

There are other instances of how countries fighting for their freedom have, in the end, been successful. Greece, in 1829, obtained her independence, after waging war against the Turks for eight years, and in 1912-13, the Balkan States lessened the power of Turkey in Europe still more. Now, the greatest struggle in the world's

history is being carried on between a great military country, which is trying to gain more territory, and to subdue other countries, and the nations of Europe, determined to maintain their freedom. Germany has devastated Belgium, but she has not crushed the spirit of the Belgian people. She has only roused against herself the anger of Great Britain, Russia, France and Italy. The Allies are fighting in a just cause—Germany in a most unjust cause. In previous history it has been seen that the countries striving for the Right have eventually overcome those which have only Might on their side. History is said to repeat itself. Therefore, we may look forward to the final triumph of the Allies over Germany—a triumph which will be one more proof that "In the end, a country true to itself, and determined to claim God's gift to brave men, will overmatch a mere army, however solid its force."

M.V.A.

COLLEGE LIFE.

"College Days are the happiest days of one's life." How often we hear these words repeated by old students. Ask the present students, at the beginning of their course, what they think about it.

So, as each stage of our life comes upon us, we feel it too hard and would like to escape it, but on looking back we long for what we once despised.

Now I am a present student, but my account will be pleasing as far as I can make it so.

With what a dread I entered College. How I hated being one of many. I was not the only one to be sympathised with and thought of. Others suffered with me and all were treated alike. I thought I should never get used to being away from home. Now all is forgotten. Every little trouble that used to be a mountain is now a molehill. We have such jolly times, though there are many things which cannot please all. These help to strengthen our characters and make us broad-minded as we need to be for our profession.

Now for an account of an ordinary day's work. We rise early in the morning, which, though a trial at first, has become easy by habit.

After enjoying a good breakfast, we do house-work for about half-an-hour. Then the College is like a hive of bees. Some students work in the refectory, laying the tables for dinner. Others polish the cloister, while some work in the dormitories. There are, as well, the study rooms and studio to keep spic and span. Thus every student is busy, and at the same time enjoying a period in which she can talk.

After housework, lectures or classes begin. Silence reigns throughout the College until the bell rings for dinner. Then the students enter the refectory, where they wait in silence until after grace is said. Suddenly there is a burst of noise. Everyone tries to talk at once, but gradually the noise subsides as knives and forks come into action. After the mid-day meal, all go to the garden, where games are enjoyed for an hour. How fresh everyone feels after this recreation. All health and spirits, the students once more return to study. Preparation continues until the tea-bell rings. This light meal only forms a break between studies, for after it is over the students once more return to their work.

After a time a bell is again heard. This is for supper, when the events of the day are discussed and many arguments arise as a result of tired feelings. Then everything is forgotten in half-an-hour's recreation and the students are once more fresh for their study. A 9.20 a bell rings, and after prayers all go to bed feeling tired and ready for a good rest.

Thus the days pass one after another for the greater part of the year. For three weeks in each of the last two terms of the first year the students visit schools in the neighbourhood of the College, where they practice teaching.

Each student has a class where she gives lessons in the presence of the teachers of the class. These lessons have to be prepared each night, and notes have to be written on the method in which they have to be taken. These periods of the College course are very interesting, especially when there are criticism lessons to be dealt with. Then the poor student shivers and shakes at the thought of standing before a class of unruly boys with the class-master and a person sent from the College to criticise, sitting in the background, waiting for every mistake which the student makes. But really the anticipating thoughts are much more dreadful than the real thing, which is soon forgotten.

So far, this has been a description of the serious side of College life. Now for the brighter parts. All through the year, games are played for an hour, every day after dinner. During the winter months base-ball and basket-ball take the place of tennis and cricket, which are enjoyed in the summer. Seniors play with Seniors, and Juniors with Juniors, until the former challenge the latter to a match. Then wild excitement reigns while the champions of each set contend. Sometimes the Juniors win. How proud they feel then! The Seniors look indifferent. What do they feel? More often the

Seniors win. Then the Juniors retire crestfallen to discuss the match. In the evening of the match-day, the team that challenged usually gives the others a concert for half-an-hour. This brings out the geniuses of each year and their particular merits form the topic of conversation.

Now for the holidays. Every Saturday at two o'clock the students, after tidying their cubicles and desks, are free to go out, and stay until 4.30 p.m., when they return, once more, to College. During this time it is that restaurants are visited, and tea is partaken of.

On the first Sunday of every month the students have quite a long holiday. They may quit College at 10 a.m., and must return before 8.15 p.m. During this time many of them are able to get home to see their friends. The poor victims who are left in College also have a very quiet day.

Occasionally through the term there are other holidays. Then the students have to stay in College, but enjoy games and competitions all day long. "Hide and seek" is one of the popular games, and is played in the building. This is a fine game, as there are so many passages and staircases along which to conceal oneself.

Thus College life passes, and though many students begin this phase in their lives with dread, they leave with regret, wishing they had made more use of their time.

M.H.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Mr. Gibbons left school at the end of the Christmas term to enlist in the 2nd Artists' Rifles. He has trained at Richmond, and is now in France.

At the beginning of the Spring Term, Mr. Byrne and Mr. Walker came to us to teach English and geography respectively.

Mr. Walker was married during the Easter holidays, and is now residing near the school.

Mr. Byrne has just obtained the degree of M.A. We wish to congratulate him on his success, and at the same time to express our regret that he is leaving the school at the end of this term.

T. H. Gostling, who was teaching at Studley C.E. School, enlisted in the 16th Warwicks in September. He has been in training ever since, and is now under canvas in Wensley Dale, Yorkshire.

M. Hall became a student of St. Charles' Training College, North Kensington, last September.

An interesting Lantern Lecture on the 'Retreat from Mons' was given at school one night in the spring term by the Rev. Patterson Morgan. Mr. Hall worked the school lantern, and some fine pictures were thrown on the screen. A collection was made to defray the cost of the slides, and the balance from this was forwarded to the Prince of Wales' Fund.

Mr. Hayes joined the Sherwood Foresters last September. Mr. J. Russell has taken his place as wood-work master.

Congratulations are due to G. Williams, who has just won a candidate scholarship, and to R. Collins, who has succeeded in passing an examination which qualifies him for training on H.M.S. Mercury.

A. O. Haslam, who has been in training with the 6th Warwicks, has recently left for the front.

We have heard lately of many new methods of torture employed by the Germans. Should they require any more ideas, here is a suggestion. Take ten nasturtium leaves and poke them vigorously down the victim's throat. If he bites, force him to apologise several times.

We have just been informed by D. H. and D. L. that Sir Walter Scott lived in the time of Elizabeth. Will these two please acquaint us with any other interesting facts they may discover in the future.

Any member of the school, who is in need of new headgear, should apply to M. S., who knows quite a lot about the "Millinery Partition."

We should like to know why the members of the Upper Fourth use so many drawing pins.

Bone props are singularly uninteresting things. They are insignificant to look at; uncomfortable to use; easily lost. Yet perhaps J. T. can inform us what they are like when masticated!

THE SYREN'S SONG.

O thou who wand'rest o'er the unknown main,
Guiding thy weary vessel slow along,
Striving to reach fair Ithaca again,
O listen to the burthen of our song.
We, knowing all things that the world can tell,
Have from these distant islands watched thee
well ;
So have we seen thee win immortal fame,
And heard the clamorous praises of thy name.
O brave Odysseus, we have looked on thee
Since thou hast left the walls of Ilion ;
Why dost thou waste thy life on treacherous sea,
Sailing, thou know'st not whither, on and on ?
Hast thou not done enough 'mongst mortal
men ?

Has not the victor's meed been on thy brow ?
Come, steer thy vessel towards the seashore, then
Towards the green isles thou passest even now.
And here to live forever free from care,
In land of nymphs and syrens wondrous fair,
O leave the world and thy most weary quest,
Come now across these waves and thou shalt
rest

In groves, wherein lie many a crystal pool ;
Where every flower that near doth rear its head,
Shedding its perfume o'er the air so cool,
Shall help to make for thee the softest bed.
And through the trees the wind shall die and
grow,
Lulling thee off to sleep with sighings low.
O great Odysseus, steer unto the shore,
And live here with the syrens evermore.

M. V. A.

THE CANDID FRIEND.

Of ambitious schemes her mind is full,
Such as M.A.'s and degrees one and all ;
But for all outward show she has little care,
Except for the sleekness of her hair.
Her stately mien does ne'er unbend,
Save in the company of some bosom friend.

(By L.B.)

Almost in tears, through so much glee,
Her mouth wide open you usually see—
Need anyone ask if this is L.G.

(By K.M.S.)

Wondrous socks and ties,
Matching brown eyes
Are all that matter in dress,
In the mind of K.S.

(By D.H.)

THE SYREN'S SONG.

If someone perpetually smiling you see,
And eating much lunch you'll know its L.B.
(By M.V.A.)

Generous, kind-hearted, sportive as well,
Careless, happy-go-lucky D.L.
(By D.T.)

She's certainly a very quiet person,
And you'll never find her in fun ;
And also for keeping quite silent,
I think that E.F. takes the bun.
(By W.C.)

Stiff and straight as the tallest tree,
Usually quiet, as quiet can be,
Except when he's won renown at a game,
You all know Wilfred C.'s his name.
(By N.C.)

Low shoes, huge bows and hair just so,
Although he is small, N.C. makes a show.
(By D.L.)

With observant eye and tongue so ready,
Behind the casement always merry,
But in school so prim and steady,
Is D.T.
(By K.S.)

Around her head a Grecian band,
Or else a parting stiff and staid,
Her coiffure changes day by day,
D.H. is our fastidious maid.
(By L.G.)

Outwardly calm and placid all day,
Most of us know her as frivolous and gay ;
For K.M.S. is one of the kind,
With a serious face and a frolicsome mind.
(By E.F.)

RESULT OF THE

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE PAPERS.

Form V. ...	D. Taylor	... 68 marks
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Upper IV. ...	P. Alison	... 72 "
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Lower IV. ...	Baxter	... 60 "
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Upper III. ...	B. Antrobus	56 "
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Lower III. ...	Bomford iii.	64 "
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To our surprise we learned the following
facts :—

R.S.V.P. means Reserve seats, if you please.

N.B. means Notice the bottom.

E.G. means Great England.

David's father was Solomon.

A Peccadillo is an animal.

Father Damien was a Sea God.

China's sorrow is either (1) Japan, or (2) opium smoking.

Esprit de Corps another name for the Holy Spirit.

An imp is an edible root.

And, finally, Napoleon fought against the English once, but is now fighting for us.

THE BOY SCOUTS.

This term has seen the inauguration of a company of Boy Scouts attached to our School. The present crisis in the history of our country seems a most suitable one for the "send off" of such a company.

The "Boy Scout" movement is not in any sense a military one, nor was it ever intended in its earliest stages to be a training or a preparation for a military career. The motto given by the Chief Boy Scout, Sir Robert Baden-Powell, at the outset of the movement, has certainly proved its worth during the last twelve months.

Each Boy Scout on enrolment takes as his motto "Be Prepared." What does this mean? Simply this, that boys are trained to be able to turn their hands to assist in any difficult time or situation, to forget self in helping others, and always to be on the alert to give time, labour, and willing service wherever needed. This is what the Scout is intended to do. He is trained in drill to make him fit and active. He has scouting games to make him alert, quick in movement, active and observant.

Every Scout on enrolment takes the oath of allegiance and is accepted as a member. The boys then begin a system of training which gradually leads them by a series of tests to greater competency. The first test is a simple one, and on passing it the scout is enrolled as a "Tenderfoot," and can wear the badge of the movement, "B.P." Then follows a series of tests in such branches as signalling, cycling, first-aid, cooking, building, skirmishing, natural history, &c., &c., each of which can be chosen according to the taste of the individual Scout. Every Scout is expected to prepare for and take as many of these tests as possible.

We have started in good style this term, and I think all the members of the company are keen, and seem to enjoy both the serious and the "game" side of the training. We have sent a request to Headquarters to be entered as a company belonging to the Warwickshire Scouts, and if accepted we shall have to attend reviews in various parts of the county, and thus gain valuable experience and

pleasure at the same time. We have now two Patrols of seven Scouts in each, and have just added three "Cubs," who will be of age for enrolment as full Scouts next term.

We are glad to enrol from time to time boys who are prepared to take the movement seriously, to attend the meetings regularly, and to enter the various tests in rotation, and to all such we can promise not only an enjoyable time but an excellent training in usefulness and readiness to face any emergency which may arise.

We have thought that some boys might be deterred from joining owing to living away from school, and if there are any such we should be glad to hear of them and to consider if anything could be arranged in the way of altering the time of meetings so that all might have the advantage of joining. Suggestions from such boys will be welcomed. No boy is either too old or too young to join. The older ones become leaders or corporals and enjoy certain privileges, the younger ones become "Cubs" until of age. We regret that owing to lack of training and funds we are unable to camp this summer, but we hope by next summer to be in full swing and to have a full camp experience. We certainly recommend any boy who wishes to have thorough enjoyment, with good training, to enrol without delay. Full costumes are not essential, but can be purchased in instalments. Herewith we append an account of our doings up to date.

G. S. WALKER,
Scoutmaster.

SCOUTS' REPORT FOR SUMMER TERM.

The first meeting of the Alcester Grammar School Scouts was held on May 18th, 1915. Fourteen boys attended, and the Scoutmaster, Mr. Walker, explained the Movement and use of the Scouts. Two patrols were formed, the "Kangaroos" under the leadership of W. Cowper, and the "Peacocks" under N. Collins.

The first outing was on May 25th, when the newly-formed patrols were pitted against each other in a game, "*Attack v. Defence*." The "Peacocks," who were attacking, failed to break through the line of "Kangaroos," who guarded the wood. This gave a lead of 10 points to the "Kangaroos." The next Tuesday the "Kangaroos" attacked, and E. Bunting reached the Ammunition wagons (i.e., the cycles of the Troop).

The Scouts had their uniforms by June 8th, and they looked smart, when they went to Oversley to

bathe. On the next three meetings Cycling Trails were laid. At every corner a sign was put, so that the "hounds" might see which way the "hares" had gone. This proved a success, and the Scouts enjoyed their outings thoroughly. The number of boys in the Scouts is eighteen, four having joined since May, and the troop is divided as follows :—

Scoutmaster—Mr. Walker.

Patrol Leaders—Cowper (K.) and Collins (P.)

Corporals—Harbige and G. Birds.

Scouts—"Kangaroos"—E. Bird, E. Bunting, Clark, Phillips, D. Collins, C. Bunting and P. Antrobus.

"Peacocks"—G. Thomas, Brown, Gardner, Howse, C. Bomford, H. Bird and S. Bomford.

SPORTS' DAY, 1915.

The annual Sports' Day was held on June 10th, 1915, in brilliant weather. The racing started at 2.30 and went on continuously until 4.30. The smaller girls then gave a display of dancing on the tennis lawn.

In the Art Room and Hall there were some very good exhibits by the girls, consisting of cookery, essays, table decoration and needlework. After the dancing had finished, Mr. Wells read over the names of the winners, and then called upon Mrs. Chapman to present the cup and shield. The shield was presented to Hall, the captain of the Jackals, and the Victor Ludorum Cup to Sisson. There were no other prizes this year on account of the war.

LIST OF EVENTS.

Event.	Age.	First.
Quarter-mile	over 14 yrs.	Sisson.
100 yards	12-14 yrs.	Smith I.
Egg and Spoon	under 12 yrs.	Collins III.
100 yards	over 14 yrs.	Richardson.
Egg and Spoon	Girls	P. Adkins.
220 yards	12-14 yrs.	Smith I.
Half-mile	over 14 yrs.	Hall.
100 yards	under 12	Sisam.
Football race	12-14	Bunting I.
Slow bicycle race	open	Heard.
Half-mile	12-14 yrs.	Heard.
220 yards	over 14	Sisson.
Tug-of-War		Brownies.
Hurdle race	over 14	Whitehouse.
Sack race	under 12	Hewitt.
Obstacle race	over 14	Bird I.
100 yards	Girls	K. Wilesmith.
Three-legged race	under 12	Bunting II. & Collins III.
Consolation race	12-14	Thomas II.

Football race	over 14	Sisson.
High jump	12-14	Bird II.
The mile	over 14	Whitehouse.
Three-legged race	Girls	M. Burke & E. Wilesmith.
Hurdle race	12-14	Stock.
Obstacle race	under 12	Bird III.
Crab walk	over 14	Bird I
Obstacle race	12-14	Heard.
Consolation race	over 14	Bird I.
Relay race	Three teams	Hall (Jackals).
Crab walk	12-14 yrs.	Bird II.
High jump	over 14	Sisson.
Long jump	over 14	Sisson, 14ft. 10½in.
Long jump	12-14	Bird II., 12ft. 8½in.
Throwing cricket ball	over 14	Hall, 72yds.
Throwing cricket ball	12-14	Brown, 6yds. 2ft.

FOOTBALL SEASON, 1914-15.

The Football XI. concluded a very successful season by visiting Evesham, the result being a draw of one each. During the season the School played eleven matches, winning seven, drawing three, and loosing one ; fifty-seven goals were scored for the School and twelve against. All the matches were well patronised by the rest of the School. A charge for admission was made on November 14th, on the occasion of the match with the "Old Boys," when we won by eleven goals to nil. The amount taken was £2 2s. 2d., which was forwarded to the Belgian Relief Fund. The team representing the School was as follows :—

Goal—Cowper.

Backs—Heard I., Hall (captain).

Half-backs—Heard II., East, Whitehouse.

Forwards—Collins II., Harbige, Collins I., Sisson, Bird I.

FOOTBALL FIXTURES, 1914-15.

Date.	Fixtures	Where played	For	Agst.
1914				
Oct. 3rd	Evesham G.S.	Alcester	6	0
Oct. 10th	Redditch S.S.	Redditch	2	2
Oct. 17th	Stratford C.S.	Stratford	1	1
Nov. 14th	Old Boys	Alcester	11	0
Nov. 21st	Evesham G.S.	Evesham	5	1
Dec. 12th	King's Norton S.S.	Alcester	5	1

SPRING TERM.

Jan. 30th	Redditch S.S.	Alcester	5	0
Mar. 6th	Evesham G.S.	Alcester	9	2
Mar. 13th	Old Boys	Alcester	1	3
Mar. 20th	Stratford C.S.	Alcester	11	1
Mar. 27th	Evesham G.S.	Evesham	1	1

GIRLS' COMPETITIONS ON SPORTS DAY.

In connection with Sports Day an exhibition of the Girls' Competitions was held in the Hall. There were four branches of competitions: Needlework, Knitting, Cooking and Drawing. For their Needlework Competitions, the senior girls dressed dolls—the junior girls made overalls. E. Fenn won first prize for her doll, and E. Bowyer won first prize for her overall. In the Knitting, G. Horniblow won first prize for her cuffs. In the Cooking Competition E. Stock won first prize for her Cold Sweet; M. V. Alison for her Supper Dish; and E. Thompson for her Scones. The subject set for the Drawing was a design for a Sport's Programme. M. V. Alison won first prize. B. Antrobus won first prize for her illustration of a Fairy Story in the Brushwork Competition for the juniors. In addition there were History Essay and Table Decoration Competition. The quotation chosen for the History Essay was taken from Browning's "Home Thoughts from the Sea"; "Here and here did England help me; how can I help England?" D. Taylor won first prize. With regard to the Table Decorations, the scheme was to be carried out in wild flowers only. M. Stocks' arrangement was judged to be the best.

On account of the war, no prizes were given.

CRICKET.

There has not been so much interest taken in Cricket this season. The number of fixtures has been less than formerly, and this is mainly owing to the War. Great Alne, Harvington, and Temple Grafton have not run teams, as so many of their members have joined the Army.

So far only three matches have been played, against the Rev. Paterson Morgan's XI., Coughton, and Stratford Commercial School respectively.

Amongst ourselves team matches have been played between the Brownies, Jackals, and Tomtits, and also between the Scouts and the Rest.

A.G.S. v. REV. PATERSON MORGAN'S XI.—Won.

A.G.S., 125. Mr. Wells 44, J. Ankcorn 40.

Rev. Morgan's XI., 44.

A.G.S. v. COUGHTON—Lost.

A.G.S., 25.

Coughton, 96.

A.G.S. v. STRATFORD COMMERCIAL SCHOOL Lost.

A.G.S., 39 and 47.

Stratford C.S., 36 and 62.

In the 2nd innings for Alcester, Cowper made 22 and Hall 13.

In the Team matches for the Shield—

Jackals beat Tomtits, 47—32.

Jackals beat Brownies, 76—41.

Tomtits beat Brownies, 56—26.

HOCKEY, 1914-15.

The hockey season was quite an enjoyable one. We were sorry to lose M. Hall, who had played so well for the School. M. V. Alison was elected captain in her place. The practice games were for the most part keenly contested, there being much competition to get into the School eleven. We fully

appreciate the way in which Miss Evans worked for the team. During each practice, she was on the field, either taking part in the game or acting as referee. We are also grateful to Miss E. Bowen-Davis, a Devon County player, and to Miss Jephcott, of Great Alne, who helped us by attending several practices and playing against us. We only played three matches this season. The results are as follows:—

School v. Evesham Grammar School—at home.

Result—School 0, Evesham 2.

School v. Stratford High School—away.

Result—School 1, Stratford 1.

School v. Evesham Grammar School—away.

Result—School 0, Evesham 6.

In the House Hockey matches, The "Tomtits" were the strongest side. Out of a maximum of 40 marks, The "Tomtits" obtained 40. The "Brownies" and "Jackals" 10 each. These were added to the total for the shield. M.V.A.

NETBALL.

During the netball season the three teams, "Jackals," "Brownies," and "Tomtits," played four matches each. On the whole the Jackals were successful, for they won three matches out of the four, in spite of the fact that one of the players, W. Taylor, had been unable to play, also at the end of the season B. Adkins left. The teams were fairly equal, and consequently the play was often very quick. As a result the matches were watched with considerable interest by the spectators, and a hard struggle ensued before any side could win. The results were as follows:—

"Jackals" obtained 24 marks.

"Brownies" " 16 "

"Tomtits" " 16 "

Maximum, 32 points.

LAWN TENNIS.

ALCESTER v. EVESHAM.—A match was played on June 26th, at Alcester, between the girls of the Evesham High School and the girls of Alcester Grammar School. The Evesham girls brought four couples with them. Five games were played each side of the net. The weather was very favourable, and a very enjoyable day was spent. The Evesham girls won by ten games, the final score being 75—85. The Alcester girls were complimented on the style of their play.

TOURNAMENT. A Tournament was held on July 10th. The weather again was very favourable, and a very enjoyable day was spent. This year only doubles were played. Owing to the War prizes were not given this year. E. Thompson and F. Heard were first, beating D. Hill and D. Winnett by two games. P. Jephcott and Madeline Adkins were third with the score of 32 games, the top score being 39.

GIRLS v. BOYS.—The girls challenged the boys at Tennis, the boys being victorious. Sisson played well at the net, and his partner, Hall, also played very well. Whitehouse and Cowper played much better in the second set. Six games were played each side of the net. The final score was 20—24 games.